THE NEW
INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • TUESDAY • MAY 10, 2022 • ₹9.00 • PAGES 18 • LATE CITY EDITION

READ SHARE FOLLOW
newindianexpress.com
facebook.com/thenewindianexpress twitter.com/newindianexpress
instagram.com/newindianexpress

DEMOLITION DRAMA IN DELHI'S SHAHEEN BAGH

Bulldozers rolled into the epicentre of the 2019 CAA protests on Monday, but protesters forced local body officials to go back

PLAINT AGAINST AAP MLA FOR OBSTRUCTION

On Monday morning, the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) had sent its officials to carry out an anti-encroachment drive on the main road in Shaheen Bagh, but they were stopped by protesters led by Aam Aadmi Party MLA Aamanatullah Khan. SDMC later filed a police complaint against Khan and his supporters for obstructing the civic body's work

SC REFUSES TO ENTERTAIN CPM's PLEA

- Meanwhile, the CPM moved the Supreme Court against the demolition drive, but the apex court rejected the plea saying it cannot interfere at the instance of a political party
- A bench of Justices L Nageswara Rao and B R Gavai asked the petitioner to approach the Delhi High Court

11 am

SDMC TO CARRY OUT DEMOLITION DRIVE IN DELHI'S NEW FRIENDS COLONY ON TUESDAY

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Rajapaksas' house in ancestral village razed

The ancestral home of the Rajapaksas in Medamulana in Hambantota city was set on fire by protesters. Mahinda's house in Kurunegala was also torched. Besides, a mob destroyed the D A Rajapaksa Memorial — constructed in the memory of the father of Mahinda and Gotabaya — in Hambantota

Global outrage

"We condemn the violence against the peaceful protesters today and call on the government to conduct a full investigation including the arrest and prosecution of anyone who incited violence," US Ambassador Julie Chung tweeted. The EU urged all parties to act with restraint and refrain from violence

(Top) Protesters and government supporters clash outside the official residence of the Prime Minister in Colombo; (Left) A Catholic priest runs to safety as a pro-government demonstrator tries to attack | AFP

Opposition leader Premadasa roughed up

Opposition leader Sajith Premadasa, who visited the GotaGoGama protest site to assess the situation, was also allegedly roughed up by Mahinda loyalists

Eldest Rajapaksa goes, one left

Protesters among at least five persons dead in spiralling violence as ruling party uses force to end agitation; one lawmaker commits suicide; curfew imposed across Sri Lanka

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

AT least five persons, including a member of parliament of the Sri Lankan ruling party, died in sudden escalation of political violence across the country on Monday, forcing embattled Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa to resign after hanging on to power for weeks.

The protests that began on April 9 against the misrule of the Rajapaksas for pushing the country into its worst economic mess in decades, were peaceful till the ruling family apparently decided to teach the agitators a lesson.

Mahinda's supporters attacked protesters outside younger brother and President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's office in the morning, leaving at least 200 people injured. A nationwide curfew had to be imposed and the army deployed.

Sensing the attack had boomeranged, Mahinda, 76, sent his resignation letter to Gotabaya. "Effective immediately I have tendered my resignation as Prime Minister to the President," he tweeted.

Mahinda's goons attacked demonstrators at MynaGoGama and GotaGoGama protest sites. The tents opposite Temple Trees, the official residence of the prime minister, were also pulled down by the mob.

The violence triggered widespread anger, with people turning their wrath on Rajapaksa loyalists. Vehicles carrying supporters of Mahinda were attacked across the country.

The car of the ruling party's lawmaker Amarakeerthi Athukorala was surrounded by protesters at the north western town of Nittambuwa. Athukorala allegedly opened fire killing one of the protesters. When the angry mob toppled the car, he took refuge in a nearby building and committed suicide using his own revolver. Later, the bodies of Athukorala and his personal security officer were found.

Protesters also tried to storm Mahinda's official residence in Colombo and set a truck at the entrance ablaze. Security personnel had to fire in the air to control the situation.

The mass violence has made President Gotabaya's position more difficult. He is the last Rajapaksa left in power. Others in the clan, including Basil and Namal, have already resigned. Mahinda's son and his chief of staff, Yoshitha Rajapaksa, left for Singapore with his wife early on Monday morning.

Former Lankan cricket great Sanath Jayasuriya said, "This is the end of the Rajapaksas. I never thought that this type of thuggery will be unleashed on innocent protesters at Galle Face in broad daylight and outside Temple Trees." PTI

Mahinda Rajapaksa

180-deg turn, as govt offers to review sedition law on its own

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

IN a sudden change of heart, the Central government on Monday filed a fresh affidavit before the Supreme Court saying it has decided to reconsider its position on Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 that deals with sedition law.

Monday's affidavit comes just a couple of days after it defended 124A in its submission in the court, arguing that instances of the abuse of the law cannot justify the reconsideration of a binding judgment of the Constitution bench.

Doing a complete U-turn, the government on Monday requested the court to await its internal exercise and not invest time in examining 124A, adding the relook will happen before a constitutionally permitted appropriate forum.

The Union home ministry's affidavit said the government is committed to removing outdated colonial laws while protecting the sovereignty of the nation. Over 1,500 outdated laws have been scrapped since 2014-15 when the Modi government first came to power, it said.

It also pointed out that over 25,000 compliance burdens that were pain points have already been removed under Narendra Modi's watch as prime minister. "Various offences which were causing mindless hindrances to people have been de-criminalised. This is an ongoing process. These were laws and compliances which reeked of a colonial mindset and thus have no place in today's India," the Centre said.

Penal provisions

The affidavit said there is general agreement about the need for statutory provisions to deal with serious offences of a divisive nature. "Penal provision for such purposes is generally accepted by all in legitimate state interest."

It added that the government was aware of various views being expressed on the subject of sedition, including concerns of civil liberties and human rights activists.

In the Kedar Nath Singh vs State of Bihar case in 1962, a Constitution bench had upheld the sedition law. The Centre in its initial affidavit had said the Kedar Nath verdict came after testing the constitutional validity of 124A from all angles.

A three-member bench led by Chief Justice N V Ramana had last week said it would hear arguments on May 10 (Tuesday) on whether pleas challenging the sedition law should be referred to a larger bench for reconsidering.

₹ slips further, on course to touch 78

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

THE rupee, which touched the lowest level of 77.56 against the dollar on Monday, may fall further to 78 or even 78.5 in the short term. Unfavourable macroeconomic conditions may continue to weigh on the rupee in the short-term as foreign investors desert India amid hike in US interest rates and widening India's trade deficit.

Experts say the rupee, like many other emerging market currencies, may be under further downward pressure as there is a high likelihood that the US central bank will hike interest rates again. The impact on global commodity prices due to uncertainties around war could also weaken the rupee further.

"The rupee has a tough week ahead. After having broken above 77 levels, there is the possibility of this move extending towards 78.00 and even 78.50 levels on spot," says currency expert Anindya Banerjee.

Rupee is in ICU: Cong

Targeting the Narendra Modi government, the Congress said the rupee is in ICU. Party leader Rahul Gandhi said the PM cannot keep the economic realities of India "hidden forever"

At the time of writing this, the rupee had settled around 77.45 after the day's low of 77.56. The rupee has fallen 3.9% since the beginning of this year, when it was trading around 74.5 against the US currency.

When foreign investors sell off their rupee-denominated investment in Indian equity and debt, the demand for dollar vis-a-vis rupee goes up, weakening the local currency. Similarly, when imports exceed exports (trade deficit) by a bigger margin, the rupee gets weak.

Some experts, however, believe the rupee needs to depreciate to maintain our export competitiveness.

AT IT AGAIN

Ravindranath, DGP, says will resign today

MANJU SHETTAR & PRAVEEN KUMAR @ Bengaluru

EXPRESSING displeasure over his recent transfer to the training wing of the Karnataka state police, Director General of Police (DGP) Dr P Ravindranath on Monday said he will tender his resignation on Tuesday.

After handing over charge to ADGP Arun Chakravarthy at Directorate of Civil Rights Enforcement (DCRE), Ravindranath walked from his office on Palace Road to the office of the state police chief on Nrupathunga Road to meet DG&IGP Praveen Sood.

Ravindranath confirmed to *TNIE* that he will resign on Tuesday morning after meeting Chief Secretary P Ravi Kumar. The 1989-batch officer is known for resigning and later withdrawing his resignation letters. He had tendered his resignation in 2008, 2014 and 2020.

The DGP said that he is being targeted by a 'few individuals' who are influencing the government.

"I am not against the government. The transfer is not on my request or in the interest of the public. It is a clear case of conspiracy and I have decided to resign," he added. P6

Will enforce SC order on speakers: CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

AS members of a pro-Hindu organisation played devotional songs from temples early Monday morning to protest against the use of loudspeakers at mosques for azaan, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said the Supreme Court order on the use of loudspeakers in public places applies to everyone and it will be implemented in a strict, but cordial, manner. No one should take law into their own hands, he said.

Demanding that the government implement the SC order and remove unauthorised loudspeakers, Sriram Sene members played devotional songs at temples in Hubballi-Dharwad and other places. In Kalaburagi, the police arrested members of the organisation when they started marching toward a mosque to play bhajans.

Bommai, after chairing a meeting with chief executive officers of zilla panchayats, said the Supreme Court has issued an order on the use of loudspeakers in public places and the then state government in 2002 too had issued an order in this regard. The issue was discussed with the senior officers during the meeting and clear orders will be issued again on implementing the court directions, he said.

"The Central government too has issued an order in accordance with recommendations of the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). It clearly specifies the places and decibel levels for use of loudspeakers in public places.

In 2002, the Karnataka government issued an order to implement the SC order and also directions from the Centre," he said.

The GO issued by the state government also specifies details on various aspects, like whether the loudspeakers are used throughout the year and the need to obtain clearance for this. P6

> The order clearly specifies the places and decibel levels of loudspeakers in public places
>
> Basavaraj Bommai, Karnataka Chief Minister

Mask may have helped acid attacker evade cops

PRAVEEN KUMAR @ Bengaluru

IT has been 12 days since a 24-year-old woman became a victim of an acid attack in Bengaluru, but there have been no clues on the whereabouts of the accused, **Nagesh** (27).

A police officer investigating the case said the compulsory mask rule, implemented in the state since Covid cases are increasing, is hampering the investigation as the accused could be taking advantage of it."Except for his pictures, none of the police officers have seen him in real life, which has made it difficult to identify him with a mask. Most accused wear caps to hide their identities, and if Nagesh is moving around wearing both a cap and mask, it will be difficult to pick him in a crowd," he added.

All this while, the acid attack victim has been told that Nagesh, who was pestering her to marry him, has been caught. "We don't want her to get depressed further with the information that the police are yet to catch him. We are trying to make her not to think about the horrific incident. Her face has not been scarred, and on Monday, she underwent a fourth surgery," one of the family members told TNIE. Sundaresh, the victim's uncle, said, "I visited the police station on Monday to get an update on the case." P3

NATION WIDE	MAY 8	MAY 9
Fresh cases	3,451	3,207
Recoveries	3,079	3,410
Deaths	40	29

KARNATAKA	MAY 8	MAY 9
Fresh cases	112	90
Recoveries	92	128
Deaths	1	1

JAB-O-METER
TAKE YOUR SHOT
May 8
13,58,822 doses
May 9
12,07,787 doses
TOTAL DOSES
1,90,43,54,263

EXPRESS READ

Time to repay debt to party: Sonia

New Delhi: Ahead of the Congress' Chintan Shivir, Congress president Sonia Gandhi sent out a clear message to critics within the organisation. She said that self-criticism is needed in party forums, as she asserted that it is time "to repay our debt to the party" | P9

PU student buried alive

Bengaluru: An 18-year-old second PU student, who had left a death note before leaving home, was buried alive after he slept in a truck and workers loaded it with sand. The deceased, Somanath, was a resident of Katmandu Layout in Hoskote town. In his suicide note, he had said he was taking the extreme step as he was being threatened by his classmates | P3

China hopes for fair Xiaomi probe

New Delhi: Closely following reports of raids on Xiaomi offices in India, China hoped that a fair, just and non-discriminatory environment would be available for top executives of Xiaomi in a probe by the ED. The ED said that Chinese allegations are baseless | P9